

SCIENTIFIC NOTE

The Schizopteridae (Hemiptera), a family new to CanadaG.G.E. SCUDDER¹

The Schizopteridae is a very small family of minute bugs belonging to the Infraorder Dipsocoromorpha (Stys 1995). These insects are typically extremely small, and have antennae with the first two segments very short, while the third and fourth antennal segments are longer and thinner, with many long, thin, erect or semi-erect setae.

Keyed by both Slater and Baranowski (1978) and Stys (1995), the Schizopteridae are 0.8 to 2.00 mm long. The forewings are convex, strongly sclerotized and beetle-like, but they overlap slightly along the midline. Characteristically, these bugs have the prosternum inflated and produced ventrally so as to enclose the fore coxae and the ventral surface of the head. The hind coxae are also peculiar in having the inner surface provided with a pair of roughened pads which are used in conjunction with a metasternal spine as a jumping organ.

The family has a worldwide distribution and is primarily tropical or subtropical, with at least 35 genera and about 120 described species (Stys 1995). Only four genera and four species are reported to occur in North America (Henry 1988; Henry et al. 2010). Males have three tarsal segments on each leg, while females have two segments on the fore and middle legs, and three segments on the hind legs. The four known North American taxa have been keyed by Baranowski and Slater (1978).

While *Glyptocombus saltator* Heide-mann is reported from several of the United States (AR, DC, GA, MD, MI, TN, VA,

WA), *Corixidea major* McAtee & Malloch is known from Arkansas, Florida, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Virginia, while *Nannocoris arenarius* Blatchley is recorded from Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia (Henry et al. 2010). *Schizoptera bispina* McAtee & Malloch is restricted to Florida in North America (Henry 1988). This note records the first occurrence of the family in Canada. The record is based on 1♂ with the data: "CAN: BC: Vancouver, Pacific Spirit Pr. Pk., 26.vi.1997, Colls. J. Lea, A. Klimaszewski, ex forest edge". The specimen (Fig. 1) is 1.33 mm long and is deposited in the Canadian National Collection of Insects, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Ottawa, ON.

This British Columbia specimen is not any of the genera or species keyed in Slater and Baranowski (1978). Dr. T.J. Henry has examined the specimen and informs me that it appears to be new to science. However, not being an expert on the family involved, I am inclined not to describe it at the present time. The elucidation of the correct identity must remain a future task.

Elsewhere, the Schizopteridae most frequently occur in damp soil and in forest litter. Little is known of their biology and feeding habits, but they are thought to be predators (Slater and Baranowski 1978).

I am indebted to Dr. T.J. Henry for his advice. Don Griffiths kindly took the photograph presented as Figure 1. Launi Lucas processed this note.

REFERENCES

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Figure 1. Family Schizopteridae. 1♂, CAN: BC: Vancouver, Pacific Spirit Pr. Pk., 26.vi.1997, Colls. J. Lea, A. Klimaszewski, ex forest edge. Photograph by D. Griffiths.